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Momen's Victories, Slow but Sure

The following keynote address was presented by Ellen Baumler,
Montana Historical Society, at an April 16, 2009,
ceremony in the State Capitol Rotunda
"Celebrating Women Elected to Serve the State of Montana."

hen miners discovered gold at Grasshopper Creek in 1862, women in the United States could not vote, could not work in most professions, and could not attend most colleges. The road to woman suffrage was long and full of bumps. Sometimes it seemed that the obstacles were insurmountable. Between 1869 and 1871, seven western legislatures considered giving women the vote. Montana was not one of them. Men dominated Montana Territory seven to one, and victories for Montana women were slow in coming.

There were a few small steps. In 1887, an amendment to Montana's territorial constitution gave women the right to vote for school trustees if they paid taxes in that district. The territorial legislature also granted women the right to hold elected positions as school trustees and county superintendants. Equality stopped there.

In anticipation of statehood, the crafters of Montana's first state constitution considered granting women the right to vote. In fact, the authors – all men – spent a whole day discussing the pros and cons of woman suffrage. They defeated the idea of including women in the new state constitution by a vote of 43 to 25.

There was one important "first" upon statehood in 1889. Ella

Knowles, a Helena teacher, wanted to practice law, but women could not take the bar exam. Male attorneys debating the issue expected her to fail, so they let her try. Ella passed and became Montana's first female attorney. She was the first woman in Montana to run for public office in 1892. She ran for attorney general even though women could not vote for her. Henry Haskell won the race, but he hired Ella as his assistant and later married her. In 1895, Ella Knowles Haskell pleaded the suffrage cause to the Legislature. It failed 41 to 35.

Many of the women who longed for suffrage were women who left the comforts of their homes, families, and friends to follow their husbands west or to become independent on the Montana frontier. These same women helped lead the national crusade for equality.



Jeannette Rankin (right) and national suffrage leader Carrie Chapman Catt speak from the balcony of the National American Woman Suffrage Association building in Washington, D.C., circa 1917. In 1914, Montana became only the sixth state to grant women the right to vote. Jeannette became the first woman elected to Congress just two years later.

They founded the Montana Woman Suffrage Association in 1895 and the Women's Protective Union in Butte in the 1890s. The WPU was the first all-female union in the West.

Woman suffrage repeatedly came before the Montana Legislature in the 1890s. Women packed the galleries each time, but the measures failed. Suffrage bills failed again in 1903 and 1905. In 1911, Jeannette Rankin, a social worker from Missoula, addressed the Legislature. "Men and women," she said, "are like right and left hands; it doesn't make sense not to use both." The bill again failed, but this time Montana suffragists did not give up so easily. They began to organize, with Jeannette as their leader.

Not all women favored suffrage. Those against it, called "Antis," argued that no woman could possibly find time for politics without neglecting her family. Harriet Sanders, wife of pioneer attorney and politician Wilbur Fisk Sanders, countered the opposition, saying that suffrage made women better mothers. Better mothers kept better homes, and their children were better educated. Better homes and educated children in turn improved the nation.

In 1913, Governor Samuel Stewart took up the cause of suffrage, and the amendment finally passed with only four dissenting votes in the Legislature. Suffragists traveled across Montana, distributing leaflets and making speeches on every street corner. Jeannette Rankin personally traveled more than 9,000 miles between January and September of 1914. Campaign efforts culminated in Helena with a spectacular parade. A long line of women carrying banners and wearing suffrage yellow marched down Main Street.

On November 3, 1914, Montana men went to the polls and granted women the right to cast their ballots. The victory was sweet. Montana became the sixth state to empower women with the right to vote, and there was much work for women to do.

Montana women helped elect Jeannette to the U.S. Congress in 1916, four years before women achieved national suffrage. Jeannette's election made surprisingly few Montana headlines. When it did make the news, Jeannette's triumph overshadowed other equally significant victories. Not only did Montanans send the first woman to Congress in that historic election, they also elected the first two women to the Montana House of Representatives and the first woman superintendent of public instruction.

Emma Ingalls of Flathead County and Maggie Smith Hathaway of Ravalli County represented opposing parties. Although one was a Democrat and one a Republican, they both championed the cause of woman suffrage and spoke out for the disenfranchised. As Emma and Maggie took the seats they earned in the Montana House in 1917, they became the voices for many more than the voters who elected them, especially for children and their welfare. May Trumper, also of Flathead County, defeated three men in the race for school superintendent. Together these women represented the ribbon at the end of the finish line in a long and hard-won race.

Lifelong feminist Emma Ingalls used the newspaper she and her husband founded, the Kalispell Inter Lake, to editorialize for civic reform. A rival editor said she was a clever and interesting writer who occasionally wielded a caustic pen. During her first term in 1917, Emma introduced the national suffrage amendment when it came before the Montana House for ratification. Returning for a second term, Emma sponsored a bill establishing the Mountain View Vocational School for Girls. Until that time, courts remanded both boys and girls to the state reform school at Miles City. Separation of boys and girls was an important step in the care of delinquent juveniles.

Emma was a pioneer homesteader, the first to irrigate in the Flathead Valley, and a pioneering newspaperwoman. She was the first woman to work with the Bureau of Child and Animal Protection, chairing the northwest district under Governor Joseph Dixon. Despite her accomplishments, Emma believed her life was unremarkable. "God put me on his anvil and hammered me into shape," she once said. "The things that seemed so hard to bear at the time have proven to be the stepping stones to a larger, richer life."

Maggie Smith Hathaway, acclaimed for translating ethics into action, also blazed a long and noteworthy trail. Maggie campaigned vigorously for woman suffrage before the 1914 election, traveling just as many thousands of miles as Jeannette Rankin. She did the same for Prohibition in 1916, speaking in every neighborhood in Ravalli County. Maggie's fellow male legislators affectionately called her "Mrs. Has-Her-Way."

Maggie drafted Montana's Mother's Pension Bill, fought to create the Child Welfare Division, and made the speech that won the eight-hour workday for women. In 1918, with nearly 10 percent of Montana men serving in World War I, Maggie spoke out for grain farmers, offering women's services to harvest their crops. She employed only women on her "manless" ranch so that more men could join the armed services. She gathered apples as well as ballots, hitched up her own plow, and turned furrows as straight as any man. A male legislator said of the diminutive redhead, "She is the biggest man in the House."

May Trumper rounded out women's victories in 1916. As school superintendent, she established teacher certification exams and advocated higher teacher salaries, longer school terms, and increased school funding. May lobbied hard for the successful passage of the State Equalization Fund in 1927, the first effort to equalize rural and urban school funding. May served 12 years while Emma Ingalls served two terms and Maggie Hathaway three. All made valuable contributions and earned the courteous respect of their male colleagues.

There would be other firsts for Montana women. In 1932 Dolly Cusker Akers became the first Native American elected to the Montana Legislature. She was the only woman elected that year. As a legislator, she chaired the Federal Relations Committee, handling Indian affairs. She oversaw passage of legislation that allowed Indians to send their children to schools run by their own communities and not by the government.

Another milestone came in 1939, when the three women serving in the Legislature – Minnie Beadle, Clare Martin, and Marian Melin – carried a bill amending the definition of "jury." Women did not usually serve because the law's definition of jury was "a body of men." Changing the definition to "a body of people" gave women equal responsibility to serve.

Women prompted some of the Legislature's most memorable moments, and some were not above shenanigans when the occasion suited. The late Polly Holmes, a Democrat beloved by veteran lawmakers for her outspoken views, served during the 1970s. She sponsored Montana's first bill to ban smoking in public places. When she rose to read her bill, opponents all lit up cigars. Unfazed, Polly put on a medical mask and wore it while she read.

Women who have served Montana have given much of themselves to the state. The bronze statue of Jeannette Rankin that stands in the nation's Capitol in a very real sense symbolizes all women and their service. Columnist Cokie Roberts said of Jeannette's bronze likeness: "The statue wasn't placed there by people who agreed with her, but by citizens of her state who admired her courage to voice dissent."

Each woman honored here made a name for herself by courageously acting on her convictions. But each is more than just a name. These memorable women paved the way for Montana women of future generations.



Gudy Martz

First Female Governor & Lieutenant Governor 1997-2004

udy Martz served as both the first female governor and the first female lieutenant governor of Montana. She was born July 28, 1943, in Big Timber, Montana, the fourth of six children of ranchers Joe and Dorothy Morstein. Her family moved to Butte when she was five years old, and her father worked as a miner and livestock inspector in the area. Judy graduated from Butte High School in 1961.

As an athletic youth, Judy excelled in sports. Her best sport was speed skating. She journeyed to Austria in 1964 to compete in the Winter Olympic Games as a member of the U.S. Olympic Speed Skating Team.

In 1965 she married Harry Martz. While her husband served overseas in the military, Judy attended Eastern Montana College (now MSU-Billings). Since 1971, she and her husband have owned and operated a commercial solid-waste disposal business in Butte. The couple raised a son and daughter, Justin and Stacey.

Judy's political career began in 1989 when she became a field representative for U.S. Senator Conrad Burns, a job that lasted until 1995. A member of the Republican Party, Judy served as lieutenant governor under Governor Marc Racicot from 1997 to 2000. She

was inaugurated as Montana's 22nd governor on January 2, 2001. Through her campaign and into her term as governor, she focused on three main policy goals: economic development, tax revision, and education.

Judy took office as governor just months before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. She soon led Montana to be the first state to produce a homeland security plan. An abrupt economic recession following the attacks challenged the Martz administration with decreasing state revenues throughout 2002. Governor Martz called a special session of the State Legislature in August 2002 to address the growing state budget deficit. She provided leadership as the Legislature cut \$110 million dollars from the state budget to help weather the economic storm.

Besides a difficult economy and other unexpected trials, such as the Libby asbestos case, her administration suffered through several political controversies and intense press coverage. Despite these challenges, Governor Martz worked to fulfill her campaign promises, including passage of income and capital-gains tax cuts. Judy showed leadership beyond Montana by serving as chair of the Western Governors' Association in 2003, and she led the effort among her fellow governors to pass the federal Healthy Forest Act.

Citing a desire to spend more time with her family, Montana's first woman chief executive chose not to run for re-election in 2004 and served but one term as governor.



Linda McCulloch

First Female

Secretary of State 2009

Inda McCulloch was born December 21, 1954, in Springfield, Ohio. She moved to Montana in 1978 and married Bill McCulloch that same year. Linda holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education with an emphasis in supervision of library media programs. She earned her degrees from the University of Montana in 1982 and 1990. She started her educational career in 1978 as a paraprofessional at the St. Labre School in Ashland, Montana. She went on to serve as an elementary teacher and school librarian in Bonner and Missoula, Montana, for 20 years.

Linda began her career in Montana politics in 1994, when she was elected to the first of three terms in the Montana House of Representatives. As a legislator, she served on the House Judiciary, Highways and Transportation, Local Government, Education, and Rules committees. During her tenure as a legislator, she also served on the Juvenile Justice and Mental Health, Indian Affairs, and Education and Local Government interim committees. In 1999, she served as the minority caucus leader and vice-chair of the House Education Committee.

Linda was elected as Montana's superintendent of public instruction in 2000 and served eight years in that office. During that time, she helped boost funding for Montana schools and implemented

several statewide programs, including Indian Education for All; full-time kindergarten; honorary high school diplomas for World War II, Korean, and Vietnam war veterans who left school to serve in the military; and the READ Montana! Program. She also helped advance rural education advocacy regarding the federal No Child Left Behind law.

As the superintendent of public instruction, Linda served on the Board of Public Education, Board of Regents, Montana Library Commission, and State Land Board from 2001 to 2008.

Linda was elected as Montana's first woman secretary of state in November 2008. She began her first term in office in January of 2009 and will continue to serve on the State Land Board as secretary of state.

From 1995 to 2000, Linda was a faculty affiliate at the University of Montana and a recipient of the Mike and Maureen Mansfield Library Scholarship.

As an active civic leader, Linda has also served as a board member for the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, the Montana Heritage Project, and the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. She serves on the advisory council of the Montana Meth Project.



Andrea Bennett

W. W. W. W. W. W. W. W. W. W.

First Female State Auditor 1985-1992

Indrea "Andy" Hemstad Bennett came by her passion for public service naturally. She was born March 13, 1952, in Great Falls to Kenneth and Phyllis Hemstad. The family had a rich legacy of service in the Montana Legislature.

Andy grew up on the family farm outside Dutton, Montana. She attended C.M. Russell High School in Great Falls, as well as Sandefjord High School in Norway and Jagellonian University in Krakow, Poland. In 1976, she earned a bachelor's degree in political science. Following graduation, she taught in public schools for five years and worked as a personnel officer for Montana Blue Cross.

Andy served as a Republican representative of House District 40 in Great Falls for three terms (1979-1983). During her tenure, she served on the Appropriations, Consumer Counsel, Business and Industry, Highways, and Health and Human Services committees.

In 1984, Montana voters elected Andy to the office of state auditor. She ran unopposed for re-election in 1988. As auditor, she supervised state finances. She also served as Montana's commissioner of insurance, commissioner of securities, and director of state payroll. Along with other top elected officials, she was a member of the Montana Land Board, the State Canvassing Board,

and the State Hail Board. She was acknowledged for her hard work in June 1990, when she was awarded a fellowship from Harvard University John F. Kennedy School for Government. The following year, she became a board member of a national group called Women Executives in State Government.

Andy announced her candidacy for governor in November 1991. She campaigned on a platform that some described as "challenging the old guard." Newspaper reports from that time certainly describe an independent and dynamic approach to the office. For example, although her past political record showed her to be a fiscal conservative, she was pro-choice. She believed that the university system needed to be run more like a corporation. But she also supported increased funding for higher education. While she supported reduction of business property taxes to support small businesses and state government spending, she was willing to consider the idea of a state sales tax. Andy lost the Republican nomination to Marc Racicot, who went on to win the gubernatorial race in the fall of 1992.

Andy moved to Florida after the 1992 election with plans to retire. However, her retirement was short-lived. In 1993, the governor of Florida asked her to chair the Property Casualty Joint Underwriting Association, which focused on helping those who could not get insurance through the regular market. Since 1996, she has been president of A. M. Bennett & Co., an insurance industry consulting firm. When asked recently what she does in her spare time, she responded, "I walk on the beach and help women get elected to public office."

Other Female State Auditors

Monica Lindeen, D-Billings: 2009-present



Porn in Jeffersonville, Ohio, in 1870, May Trumper attended Granville Female College and served as a principal at Bryan Ohio High School before ill health prompted her to migrate to the Flathead Valley in Montana in 1899. She fell in love with the

mountains and lakes of Glacier National Park and for eight years, beginning in 1908, served as superintendent of schools for Flathead

County.

In 1916, May entered politics, challenging incumbent Democrat H.A. Davee in the race for Montana superintendent of public instruction. May, a Republican, bested Davee and two other candidates by a wide margin to become Montana's first woman superintendent. She ran on a platform of reform. For the next 12 years, she promoted an agenda of longer school terms, higher teacher qualifications and salaries, increased state financial support to local school districts, county health nurses and doctors, and new agricultural and vocational training programs.

Under her tenure, the school year increased from an average of 145 days to 180 days. In an effort to improve teacher training, May established teacher certification exams and a minimum requirement of two years of high school and 12 weeks of normal school training. She decried poor teacher pay: rural teachers earned an annual salary

of \$700 compared to sheepherders at \$900 and truck drivers at \$1,800. In 1920, the state of Montana contributed \$5 per student to state schools, compared to \$15 per student in both California and Idaho. With continual prodding from May, the State Legislature finally passed a State Equalization Fund in 1927 to provide equal access to education across rural and urban districts. The creation of this fund constituted the first effort to equalize funding for school districts statewide.

May was defeated for re-election during the 1928 primary. She headed east to finish her graduate degree at Columbia University Teachers College and then went on to head the Rural Education Department at Geneseo, New York, where she remained until 1940.

Other Female Superintendents of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Ireland, R-Havre: 1929-1936 and 1941-1948

Ruth Reardon, D-Anaconda: 1937-1940

Mary M. Condon, D-Billings: 1949-1956

Harriett Miller, Missoula: 1957-1968 (ran first as Republican

then became a Democrat in 1964)

Dolores Colburg, D-Helena: 1969-1976

Georgia Ruth Rice, D-Helena: 1977-1980

Nancy Keenan, D-Anaconda: 1989-2000

Linda McCulloch, D-Missoula: 2001-2008

Denise Juneau, D-Helena: 2009-present



Edna Hinman

First Female State Treasurer & Supreme Court Clerk

Born in York, Montana, on November 27, 1902, Edna McCreanor Hinman first dabbled in state politics in 1928, when she went to work for the Republican State Central Committee. She went on to become Montana's first female state treasurer, as well as the first female clerk of the Montana Supreme Court.

1955-1964

Edna married Dewey Hinman in 1923, and for 24 years she worked on the legislative staff in both the House and Senate. She became Governor Hugo Aronson's receptionist in 1953. He appointed her that same year to complete the term of State Treasurer Charles Sheridan, who died while in office.

In 1954, Edna defeated Democrat Horace Casey to become Montana's first elected female state treasurer. In 1957, Aronson appointed her clerk of the Montana Supreme Court. Montanans re-elected Edna as state treasurer again in 1960, rejecting the bid by Democrat H.L. "Tip" O'Neal. Edna remained in the position until her retirement in 1964.

Edna's interest in politics began in her youth, when she heard Jeannette Rankin and Maggie Smith Hathaway campaigning for woman suffrage. In 1962, she accused American voters of choosing political candidates "for their looks, not their brains," and castigated

women for "not taking a serious view of politics" or running for political office.

In 1965, Edna defeated librarian Alma Jacobs of Great Falls to become chair of the Montana Equal Status Commission, dedicated to exploring the new role of women in American society. Establishment of the commission coincided with growing economic demands on the American family, such as higher costs of education and health care. These demands were prompting more women to enter the workforce.

Until her death on March 24, 2001, at the age of 99, Edna remained active in the First Presbyterian Church in Helena. She served as church secretary and treasurer, and she was the first woman moderator of the Presbytery. She was involved in a dozen other local organizations as well.

Other Female State Treasurers

Alta E. Fisher, R-Missoula: 1949-1952 (appointed) Hollis G. Connors, R-Townsend: 1973-1976

Other Female Supreme Court Clerks

Ethel Harrison, Helena: 1983-1989



Jeannette Rankin

First Female Representative in Congress 1917-1918, 1941-1942

he first woman ever to serve in the U.S. Congress, Jeannette Rankin was born on a Grant Creek ranch near Missoula to John and Olive Rankin on June 11, 1880. In 1902, she graduated from what is now called the University of Montana in Missoula and the following year received a diploma from the New York School of Philanthropy.

In 1910, Jeannette began working for the Children's Home Society in Spokane, Washington, finding homes for the institution's children. While there, she became involved in the woman suffrage movement. In 1911, she left Montana for New York, and two years later she became the field secretary for the National American Woman Suffrage Association in North Dakota. Her work helped secure the vote for women in Montana in 1914.

On July 11, 1916, Jeannette announced her candidacy for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. Her younger brother Wellington, a prominent lawyer, managed her campaign with help from Belle Fligelman of Helena. Jeannette soundly defeated her Republican opponents in the primary and went on to victory in November, defeating Democrat Harry Mitchell.

Jeannette gained notoriety on April 6, 1917, when President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress to approve U.S. entry into World War I. The sole woman in Congress joined 55 men in opposing the resolution. Both the Montana and national press attacked Jeannette for her vote.

During her first term in Congress, Jeannette worked for veterans pensions, aid for economically depressed and drought-stricken farmers, and national prohibition. She came to the aid of striking Butte miners in June 1917 after the Speculator Mine Disaster, but her efforts to implement government control of certain mines failed. In 1918, she ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the U.S. Senate.

Jeannette left politics and moved to Georgia, where she bought a small farm and spent the next 20 years advocating for peace through both the Georgia Peace Society and the National Council for Prevention of War. In June 1940, she announced her candidacy for the First Montana District of the U.S. House and defeated Jerry O'Connell in the November election. Early in her term she worked against Roosevelt's Lend-Lease and conscription legislation. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, she was the only member of Congress to vote against entry into World War II.

Jeannette continued throughout her life to speak out against war, appearing before the Montana Constitutional Convention at age 91. Death came to Montana's lifelong pacifist on May 18, 1973.



*M*aggie Hathaway

One of the First Female State Legislators 1917-1922

argaret "Maggie" Smith was born in Ohio to a Methodist minister and a teacher. She followed in her mother's footsteps and began teaching when she was only 15. When her family moved to Stevensville, Montana, in 1893, she was already a veteran educator.

Maggie's father used his pulpit to encourage every member of his congregation to fight social injustice. From him, Maggie acquired a deep belief in civic involvement and social reform. Her father served several times as chaplain of the Montana Legislature, so Maggie spent time in Helena. She continued to work with young people through the Methodist Church and at the national level through the Epworth League.

Maggie returned to teaching in 1894 in Helena, where she served as principal of Broadwater School from 1895 to 1905 and several terms as county superintendant of schools. As a school official, she was outspoken about the inequality of pay for male and female teachers.

In 1911, at age 44, Maggie married Professor Benjamin Tappan Hathaway, who was state deputy superintendant of schools. They were married only six months when Professor Hathaway died suddenly in Portland, Oregon. Maggie moved back to Stevensville to manage her parents' ranch.

Always a proponent of women's rights, Maggie began to concentrate on reforms and became active in the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), campaigning for Prohibition and woman suffrage. By 1915, she was a paid lobbyist for the Legislative Council of Montana Women, which represented 10 different women's groups.

Maggie ran for the Montana Legislature on the Democratic ticket in 1916 and served three successive terms representing Ravalli County in the House of Representatives. During the 1918 election, she was Ravalli County's only successful Democratic candidate.

Maggie was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1920. She was instrumental in Montana's ratification of the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which banned the sale of intoxicating liquors. She chaired the Committee on Public Morals, Charities, and Reform and authored the Mother's Pension Act, which provided financial aid to mothers of children who got no financial support from their fathers. Maggie considered it her duty as a widow without children to work on behalf of such children.

In 1921, Maggie was one of the first two women in the nation elected to serve as floor leader for her party. She was behind the passage of the eight-hour work day and equal pay for women.

After her tenure in the Legislature, Maggie Hathaway codified the state laws on children and served from 1925 to 1937 as secretary of the Bureau of Child Protection. She was the first woman appointed to head a state agency. The Montana Conference of Social Welfare honored her for her contributions to children's welfare in 1953, and she continued to be active until her death in 1954 at age 88.



Emma Ingalls

One of the First Female State Legislators 1917-1920

he steamer *Tom Carter* brought Emma Ingalls, her husband Clayton, and their two daughters across Flathead Lake to Demersville, Montana, in 1889. There, the family took up a homestead in the Flathead Valley. Northwestern Montana was remote and sparsely settled and in need of a newspaper. Emma and Clayton, a former newspaperman, established the Inter Lake. The newspaper moved to the new townsite of Kalispell in 1891. Although Emma was a proper Victorian lady and unaccustomed to hard work, she quickly adapted to the pressures and demands of her busy life. She learned all aspects of the newspaper business.

This energetic pioneer was born Emma A. Backhus February 7, 1860, in Racine, Wisconsin. Her family soon moved to Clear Lake, Iowa, where she attended school. Emma married Clayton O. Ingalls in 1879, and the couple moved to Corvallis, Montana Territory, in 1886.

Once permanently settled in the Flathead Valley, Emma and her husband farmed and published the newspaper. During this formative period, Emma used the paper to voice her political views and advocate reforms. Clayton's health deteriorated, and they sold the Inter Lake in the mid-1890s. After Clayton's death, Emma managed the farm and raised her two daughters. She was always

community-minded and active in the Kalispell women's club.

With a family to raise, Emma needed to make her farm a profitable endeavor. She carefully studied irrigation and cultivation methods and was the first in the Flathead Valley to bring water down from the hills and the first to plant alfalfa. By 1914, Emma's children were grown and she had other work to do, so she sold the ranch.

Emma was active in the Republican Central Committee of Flathead County, serving as secretary and chairperson and campaigning for woman suffrage. In 1916, Flathead County voters elected her to the House of Representatives, where she served as one of the first two women in the Montana Legislature. During her first term, she chaired the Committee on Public Morals, Charities, and Reform. Elected to a second term in 1918, she successfully sponsored a bill creating the Mountain View Vocational School for Girls in Helena. Since the 1890s, when the Legislature had established the state reform school in Miles City, the courts had remanded both boys and girls to the same facility.

In 1920, Governor Samuel Stewart called a special legislative session to ratify the Woman Suffrage Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Emma had the honor of introducing the bill in the Montana House of Representatives. After her second term, upon the invitation of Governor Joseph Dixon, she was the first woman to work with the State Bureau of Child and Animal Protection, chairing the committee for the northwest district. She later served as printing clerk for the state Senate during the legislative sessions of 1929 and 1931. She remained active until her death in 1940.

Other Female Legislators

Dates after legislators' names indicate sessions in which they served.

1917-1930

Florence Kerr Facey, R-Malta: House 1923

Jessie Roscow, D-Butte: House 1923

Tina Williams Hamilton, D-Dodson: House 1923, 1931, 1937

Catharine Calk McCarty, D-Glendive: House 1923, 1925

Lucy A. Curran, R-Poplar: House 1927, 1929, 1931

1931-1940

Dolly Cusker, D-Poplar: House 1933

Mabel Cruickshank, D-Bozeman: House 1937

Minnie Huser Beadle, D-Butte: House 1939

Clare E. Martin, D-Lewistown: House 1939, 1941

Marian A. Melin, D-Livingston: House 1939

1941-1950

Margaret Leppert Peterson, D-Missoula: House 1943

Ellenore M. Bridenstine, R-Terry: Senate 1945, 1947

June McCarthy, D-Butte: House 1949

Ruth Phillips, D-Landusky: Senate 1949, 1951

1951-1960

Bess R. Reed, R-Missoula: House 1951, 1953, 1955, 1961

Adeline Arnold, R-Birney: House 1953

Augusta A. Baumgartner, R-Ronan: House 1955

Bertha E. Streeter, R-Bigfork: Senate 1957, 1959

Dorothy "Dolly" Page, D-Philipsburg: House 1959

1961-1970

Helen Johnson, R-Bozeman: House 1961

Joy I. Nash, R-Townsend: House 1963

Helen F. Anderson, R-Wibaux: Senate 1963, 1965

Isabel B. James, R-Grant: House 1965, 1967

Margaret Scherf, D-Kalispell: House 1965

Eleanor M. Dougherty, D-Great Falls: House 1967

Antoinette Fraser Rosell, R-Billings: House 1957, 1961, 1963; Senate 1967, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1974, 1975

1971-1980

Dorothy Bradley, D-Bozeman: House 1971, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991

Barbara K. Bennetts, D-Helena: House 1973, 1974

Ruth B. Castles, R-Helena: House 1973, 1974

Ora J. Halvorson, D-Kalispell: House 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977

Polly Holmes, D-Billings: House 1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1979

Ann K. "Pat" Regan, D-Billings: House 1973, 1974; Senate 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989

Gail Stoltz, D-Valier: House 1973, 1974, 1975

Mrs. John Nelson Hall, D-Great Falls: Senate 1973, 1974

Betty L. Babcock, R-Helena: House 1975

Esther G. Bengtson, D-Shepherd: House 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983; Senate 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991

Ann Mary Dussault, D-Missoula: House 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981

Martha Herlevi, D-Red Lodge: House 1975

Helen G. O'Connell, D-Great Falls: House 1975, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989

Ann Seibel, D-Bozeman: Senate 1975

Geraldine W. Travis, D-Great Falls: House 1975

Margaret S. Warden, D-Great Falls: Senate 1975, 1977

Edith "Suzy" Cox, R-Livingston: House 1977

Aubyn Curtiss, R-Fortine: House 1977, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001; Senate 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Jo Ellen Estenson, D-Helena: House 1977

Edna Gunderson, D-Havre: House 1977

Jean McLane, R-Laurel: House 1977, 1981

Audrey Roth, R-Big Sandy: House 1977, 1979, 1981

Patricia Gesek, D-Whitefish: House 1979

Harriet Hayne, R-Dupuyer: House 1979, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997

Andrea Hemstad, R-Great Falls: House 1979, 1981, 1983

Vicki Johnson, D-Columbus: House 1979

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Arlyne Reichert, D-Great Falls: House 1979

Barbara J. "Bobby" Spilker, R-Helena: House 1979, 1981

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Alison Ruth Conn, R-Kalispell: House 1981

Dorothy Eck, D-Bozeman: Senate 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999

Marjorie Hart, D-Glendive: House 1981, 1983, 1985

Gay Holliday, D-Roundup: House 1981, 1983, 1985, 1987

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Ramona Howe, D-Lodge Grass: House 1983, 1985

Nancy Keenan, D-Anaconda: House 1983, 1985, 1987

Dorothy Cody, D-Wolf Point: House 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991

Ethel M. Harding, R-Polson: Senate 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995

Joan Miles, D-Helena: House 1985, 1987

Janet Moore, D-Condon: House 1985, 1987, 1989

Mary Lou Peterson, R-Eureka: House 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993

Angela Russell, D-Lodge Grass: House 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993

Carolyn Squires, D-Missoula: House 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999; Senate 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Tonia Stratford, R-Miles City: House 1987

Eleanor Vaughn, D-Libby: Senate 1987, 1989, 1991, 1993

Vivian Brooke, D-Missoula: House 1989, 1991, 1993; Senate 1995, 1997

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Diana Wyatt, D-Great Falls: House 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999

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Arlene Becker, D-Billings: House 1991, 2003, 2005, 2007; Senate 2009

Betty Bruski-Maus, D-Wibaux: Senate 1991, 1993

Jane DeBruycker, D-Dutton: House 1991

Eve Franklin, D-Great Falls: Senate 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001; House 2003, 2005, 2007

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Charlotte Messmore, R-Great Falls: House 1991

Sheila Rice, D-Great Falls: House 1991, 1993

Mignon Waterman, D-Helena: Senate 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001

Sue Bartlett, D-Helena: Senate 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999

Ellen Bergman, R-Miles City: House 1993, 1995, 1997

Joann "Jody" Bird, D-Superior: House 1993

Marjorie I. Fisher, R-Whitefish: House 1993, 1995

Liz Smith, R-Deer Lodge: House 1993, 1995, 1997

Emily Swanson, D-Bozeman: House 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999

Carley Tuss, D-Black Eagle: House 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999

Karyl Winslow, R-Billings: House 1993

Chris Ahner, R-Helena: House 1995, 1997, 1999

Peggy Arnott, R-Billings: House 1995, 1997

Sharon Estrada, R-Billings: Senate 1995, 1997

Rose Forbes, R-Great Falls: House 1995

Antoinette "Toni" Hagener, D-Havre: House 1995, 1997, 1999

Joan Hurdle, D-Billings: House 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001

Deb Kottel, D-Great Falls: House 1995, 1997, 2007, 2009

Bonnie Martinez, R-Billings: House 1995

Gay Ann Masolo, R-Townsend: House 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001

Linda H. McCulloch, D-Missoula: House 1995, 1997, 1999

Jeanette S. McKee, R-Hamilton: House 1995

Judy Murdock, R-Lodge Grass: House 1995

Debbie Shea, D-Butte: House 1995; Senate 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003

Susan L. Smith, R-Kalispell: House 1995

Lila V. Taylor, R-Busby: House 1995, 1997, 1999

Sylvia Bookout-Reinicke, R-Alberton: House 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003

Kim Gillan, D-Billings: House 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003; Senate 2005, 2007, 2009

Billie Krenzler, D-Billings: House 1997, 1999

Diane Sands, D-Missoula: House 1997, 2007, 2009

Trudi Schmidt, D-Great Falls: House 1997, 1999, 2001; Senate 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Dorothy C. Simpson, D-Florence: House 1997

Joan Andersen, R-Fromberg: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Peggy Bergsagel, R-Billings: House 1999

Rosalie "Rosie" Buzzas, D-Missoula: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Edith J. Clark, R-Sweetgrass: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2007

Kathleen Galvin-Halcro, D-Great Falls: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Mary Anne Guggenheim, D-Helena: House 1999

Gail Gutsche, D-Missoula: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Carol Juneau, D-Browning: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005; Senate 2007, 2009

Monica Lindeen, D-Huntley: House 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005

Carol Griffith Williams, D-Missoula: House 1999; Senate 2005, 2007, 2009

Cindy Younkin, R-Bozeman: House 1999, 2001, 2003

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Debby Barrett, R-Dillon: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007; Senate 2009

Dorothy Berry, R-Hamilton: Senate 2001

Norma Bixby, D-Lame Deer: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007

Dee Brown, R-Hungry Horse: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2009

Eileen Carney, D-Libby: House 2001, 2003

Gilda Clancy, R-Helena: House 2001

Nancy Rice Fritz, D-Missoula: House 2001, 2003

Linda L. Holden, R-Valier: House 2001

Joey Jayne, D-Arlee: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007

Christine Kaufmann, D-Helena: House 2001, 2003, 2005; Senate 2007, 2009

Michelle Lee, D-Livingston: House 2001

Holly Raser, D-Missoula: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007

Diane Rice, R-Harrison: House 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007

Clarice Schrumpf, R-Billings: House 2001, 2003

Elaine Sliter, R-Somers: House 2001

Emily Stonington, D-Bozeman: Senate 2001, 2003

Jill Cohenour, D-East Helena: House 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Sue Dickenson, D-Great Falls: House 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Carol Gibson, D-Billings: House 2003

Carol Lambert, R-Broadus: House 2003, 2005, 2007

Penny Morgan, R-Billings: House 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009

Veronica Small-Eastman, D-Lodge Grass: House 2003, 2005, 2007

Sandy Weiss, D-Billings: House 2003

Elsie Arntzen, R-Billings: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Mary Caferro, D-Helena: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Margarett Campbell, D-Poplar: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Robyn Driscoll, D-Billings: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Emelie Kay Eaton, D-Laurel: House 2005

Wanda Grinde, D-Billings: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Teresa K. Henry, D-Missoula: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Cynthia Hiner, D-Deer Lodge: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Lynda Moss, D-Billings: Senate 2005, 2007, 2009

Janna Taylor, R-Dayton: House 2005, 2007, 2009

Jeanne Windham, D-Polson: House 2005

Julie French, D-Scobey: House 2007, 2009

Betsy Hands, D-Missoula: House 2007, 2009

Pat Ingraham, R-Thompson Falls: House 2007, 2009

JP Pomnichowski, D-Bozeman: House 2007, 2009

Michele Reinhart, D-Missoula: House 2007, 2009

Franke Wilmer, D-Bozeman: House 2007, 2009

Carlie Boland, D-Great Falls: House 2009

Forrestina "Frosty" Boss Ribs, D-Heart Butte: House 2009

Margie MacDonald, D-Billings: House 2009

Sue Malek, D-Missoula: House 2009

Edith Zapata McClafferty, D-Butte: House 2009

Carolyn Pease-Lopez, D-Billings: House 2009

Cheryl Steenson, D-Kalispell: House 2009

Sharon Stewart-Peregoy, D-Crow Agency: Senate 2009

Wendy Warburton, R-Havre: House 2009



Governor J. E. Erickson signs the Montana ratification of the Child Labor Amendment in the presence of (left to right) his secretary Will Aiken, Mrs. Isaac Choate and Belle Fligelman Winestine of the League of Women Voters, and his wife in 1927.



Karla Gray

First Female Supreme Court Chief Justice 2000-2008

A arla Gray was the second woman to serve on the Montana Supreme Court but the first ever elected, rather than appointed, to the state's highest judicial panel. She was also the first to serve as chief justice.

Karla's tenure began in 1991, when she was appointed by Governor Stan Stephens to fill the position vacated by Justice Diane Barz. In 1992 and 1998, she successfully campaigned for and was re-elected to her nonpartisan position on the Supreme Court.

Unlike the practice in many states, where the chief justice is selected internally by the members of the state Supreme Court, the chief justice of the Montana Supreme Court is elected by the voters of the state. Karla became Montana's first female chief justice following a hotly contested election in 2000. She was one of a remarkable group of women nationwide who became chief justices during the first decade of this century.

With nearly 10 years of experience as a justice, Karla took on the leadership of the Judicial Branch at a time of significant change in how the court system was organized. She effectively implemented a legislative mandate to assume oversight of the state's District Courts. Over her career at the Supreme Court, she wrote close to

800 opinions. She was a strong voice for the "Access to Justice" movement within the state, including advocating for *pro bono* work by members of the State Bar.

By the time Karla retired, another woman had joined her on the Supreme Court bench: Justice Patricia "Pat" Cotter. The ranks of women in District Court judgeships had grown to nine.

Karla chose not to run for a second term as chief justice, saying "I have not been able to persuade myself that I can serve another full, eight-year term with the same energy and dedication I have poured into being chief justice from the moment I took office."

To read about the first female Supreme Court clerks, please see pages 19-20.

Other Female Supreme Court Justices

Diane Barz, Billings: 1989-1991

Patricia "Pat" Cotter: 2001-present



First Female Supreme Court Justice & District Court Judge 1979-2003

Montana did not have a female member of its highest court until just a couple of months shy of the 100th anniversary of statehood. In September 1989, Governor Stan Stephens appointed Diane MacDonald Barz, a Montana native, to serve on the state Supreme Court. She served through 1991.

Prior to her appointment, Diane had established several other landmark firsts for women in the Judicial Branch of Montana. She was the first woman law clerk at the Montana Supreme Court. In 1979, she was sworn in as a District Court judge in Yellowstone County, making her not only the first woman to serve as a District Court judge but also the youngest person ever to be elected to the District Court bench.

After leaving the Supreme Court, Diane went to the U.S. Attorney's Office where she worked under her former law partner, Doris Poppler, the first woman U.S. Attorney General for the State of Montana.

In 1994, Diane was elected again to a District Court judgeship in Yellowstone County. She served there until her retirement in 2003. In total, Diane served 20 years on the District Court bench.

In addition to her years of judicial service, she has been active in community life and professional organizations. She was honored in 2004 by her law school alma mater, the University of Montana, with its Distinguished Alumni Award.

Other Female District Court Judges

Dorothy McCarter, 1st Judicial District: 1989-present

Margaret Johnson, 8th Judicial District: 1994-2003

Katherine Curtis, 11th Judicial District: 1995-present

Susan Watters, 13th Judicial District: 1998-present

Deborah Kim Christopher, 20th Judicial District: 2000-present

Katherine Irigoin, 7th Judicial District: 2000-present

Julie Macek, 8th Judicial District: 2001-present

Ingrid Gustafson, 13th Judicial District: 2004-present

Holly Brown, 18th Judicial District: 2004-present

Laurie McKinnon, 9th Judicial District: 2007-present

Kathy Seeley, 1st Judicial District: 2009-present



Mancy McCaffree

First Female Public Service Commissioner 1993-2000

ot only was Nancy McCaffree the first woman elected to sit on the Montana Public Service Commission, but she was the first woman to serve as its chair and vice chair. She originally was elected in 1992 to the regulatory agency, which is responsible for ensuring that public utilities in Montana provide adequate service to customers at reasonable rates.

Nancy was born September 29, 1935, in Helena, Montana. She operated an independent travel office in Forsyth, Montana, and held several positions in state government.

A Democrat, Nancy worked in the Attorney General's Office and with Governor Forrest H. Anderson. She served for three years as supervisor of VISTA volunteers in the state Department of Community Affairs.

She chaired the Rosebud County Literacy Council and was on the executive board of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

Nancy was elected to chair the PSC in 1995. She won re-election in 1996 and was elected vice chair the following year. She chose not to run again in 2000.

Nancy has five children and four stepchildren with her husband Ed.

Other Female Public Service Commissioners

Gail Gutsche, D-Missoula: 2009-present



Montana women have long been active in politics. In this undated photo, members of the Montana League of Women Voters convince Chief Eagle Cap of the Blackfeet Nation to sign a petition to reduce world armaments at the Montana State Fair in Helena.

Convention of 1972

In 1972, 100 men and women met in Helena to craft a new constitution to guide the State of Montana. The document was to replace the original 1889 constitution adopted at statehood.

Elected by the people of Montana, the delegates to the Constitutional Convention were "on the whole, inquisitive, studious, well-meaning, and sincerely interested in improving the Montana political framework," according to Leo Graybill, Jr., president of the convention.

Generally speaking, the delegates were not seasoned politicians. They came from all walks of life, and about a fifth of them were women.

The grassroots assembly gathered at the State Capitol for 54 days. The constitution that it produced was about 12,000 words long – half the length of the original version – and it reflected a prevailing progressivism. It loosened restrictions on the executive and legislative branches that had been designed to protect the early mining industry. But it also insisted on more open government, subject to the scrutiny of the public and press.

Montana citizens ratified the new constitution through referendum on June 6, 1972.



Female delegates to the Constitutional Convention gather on the steps in the rotunda of the State Capitol on November 30, 1971, soon after their election by the people of Montana.

Female Delegates

Betty Babcock, R-Helena
Grace C. Bates, D-Manhattan
Virginia Hogan Blend, D-Great Falls
Jean M. Bowman, R-Billings
Daphne Bugbee, R-Helena
Marjorie Cain, D-Libby
C. Louise Cross, D-Glendive
Dorothy Eck, D-Bozeman
Marian S. Erdmann, R-Great Falls
Rachell K. Mansfield, D-Geyser

Catherine Howell Pemberton,
R-Broadus

Arlyne E. Reichert, D-Great Falls
Mae Nan Robinson, R-Missoula
M. Lynn Sparks, D-Butte
Lucile Speer, D-Missoula

Veronica Sullivan, D-Butte
Edith Van Buskirk, D-Havre
Margaret S. Warden, D-Great
Falls

Katie Payne, R-Missoula

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